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July 13, 2007 - Action Alert No. 8

***SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE POLICIES
IN THE 2007 FARM BILL!!***

**URGE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE TO
CO-SPONSOR AND SUPPORT KEY AMENDMENTS
IN FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP**

On July 12th, the Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, Collin Peterson (D-MN) unveiled his latest draft farm bill. In addition to the main bill that is completely funded, Peterson also introduced a secondary “reserve” bill that is a wish list of things that could be funded if additional offsets are found to pay for them.

Several important priorities of the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition were included in the real bill, including major pieces of the SAC-endorsed Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act. But huge problems remain. Most glaringly, Peterson’s proposal slashes over \$4 billion from the Conservation Security Program and stops new enrollments for the next four years (2008-2011). At the same time, no meaningful payment caps on huge payments to mega-farms are included. Even in areas where the bill makes some positive strides, it lacks any sizable commitment to the innovative programs that are necessary to improve family farm profitability, the health of individuals, communities, and the environment. We still have an opportunity to win some improvements in the bill next week – if we act now!

The Chairman’s bill will be marked up and voted on by the full House Agriculture Committee on July 17, 18, and 19. **Full committee markup is our chance to help pass amendments that will restore and increase funding for the Conservation Security Program, organic research, organic conversion, and farmers markets**, and to also rally support for real, effective payment limitation reform.

PLEASE CALL OR FAX TODAY THROUGH JULY 19

Time is of the essence. The Committee will vote on amendments starting on July 17. Please call your Representative's office (see list of Representatives and their contact information below) and ask for their legislative aid that works on agriculture. If the agriculture aid is unavailable, leave a message with your name, phone number and the message below on the aid's voice mail or with the receptionist.

If you prefer to write, fax a brief letter with the points below, along with your name and address and contact information.

Remember to tell your story! Share with your Member why you think these programs matter!

The message is simple. I am a constituent (or resident of the state that the Congressperson represents) and I am calling to urge Representative _____ to co-sponsor and express their support for the following amendments during the full House Agriculture Committee markup:

- ❖ *Incentives for superior conservation systems on land in agricultural production:*
 - Support an amendment by **Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)** that will restore funding for the Conservation Security Program.

Background: The CSP is the first and only program that rewards good farm stewardship and conservation on land in agricultural production. It should be the cornerstone of the Conservation Title in the next Farm Bill, not raided by billions of dollars to pay for other programs as in the Peterson bill.

- ❖ *Support for farmers markets:*
 - Support two amendments by **Rep. Steve Kagen (D-WI) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)** to (1) update and improve the authorizing language in the Farmers' Market Promotion Program and (2) increase mandatory funding for the Farmers' Market Promotion Program to \$25 million annually.

Background: The Peterson bill provides \$5 million annually for the FMPP, rising to \$10 million in 2011. This is an important step forward. But given the tremendous demand for farmers' markets, a larger increase in Farmers Market Promotion Program funding is entirely justified. In 2006, for example, 369 FMPP applications were submitted, but only 20 were funded.

- ❖ *Assistance for farmers' and ranchers' transition to organic production and for research that supports organic and sustainable agriculture systems:*

- Support an amendment by **Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)** for organic conversion assistance.

Background: The barriers to organic conversion are significant. It is critical that the new Farm Bill include financial and technical assistance to help farmers convert to organic production. The Peterson bill does not include an organic conversion program.

- Support an amendment by **Rep. Dennis Cardoza (D-CA)** calling for mandatory funding for organic research.

Background: The Organic Farming Research and Extension Initiative, is USDA's only competitive grants program dedicated to the specific scientific

and outreach needs of organic agriculture. The Peterson bill does not provide mandatory funding for the program even though it received mandatory funding in the last farm bill.

- Support an amendment by **Rep. Steve Kagen (D-WI)** requiring a “fair share” of total USDA-ARS funding be applied to organic research.

Background: USDA research programs have not kept pace with the growth of organic agriculture in the marketplace. Although organic currently represents about 3 percent of the total U.S. food retail market, the share of USDA research targeted to organic agriculture and marketing only represents 0.6% annually.

❖ *Ensure fair and competitive agricultural markets:*

- Oppose the amendment expected to be offered to strike the provision (introduced as an amendment during Subcommittee markup by Rep. Leonard Boswell, D-IA) that bans mandatory arbitration clauses from production contracts.

Background: Mandatory arbitration is used by integrators to prevent contract poultry and other contract growers from being able to exercise their legal options to enforce fair contracts.

110th CONGRESS: HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Democrats

| Representative | Staff | Phone | FAX |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Collin Peterson (MN-7), Chair | Robin Goracke | 202-225-2165 | 202-225-1593 |
| Tim Holden (PA-17) | Liz Hermsen | 202-225-5546 | 202-226-0996 |
| Mike McIntyre (NC-7) | Kim Sega | 202-225-2731 | 202-225-5773 |
| Bob Etheridge (NC-2) | Benjamin Bell | 202-225-4531 | 202-225-5662 |
| Leonard Boswell (IA-3) | Alexis Taylor | 202-225-3806 | 202-225-5608 |
| Joe Baca (CA-43) | Yooli Choi | 202-225-6161 | 202-225-8671 |
| Dennis Cardoza (CA-18) | Anne Cannon | 202-225-6131 | 202-225-0819 |
| David Scott (GA-13) | Gary Woodward | 202-225-2939 | 202-225-4628 |
| Jim Marshall (GA-8) | Bradley Edgell | 202-225-6531 | 202-225-3013 |
| Stephanie Herseth (SD-at large) | Ryan Stroschein | 202-225-2801 | 202-225-5823 |
| Henry Cuellar (TX-28) | Thomas Capehart | 202-225-1640 | 202-225-1641 |
| Jim Costa (CA-20) | Jacqlyn Schneider | 202-225-3341 | 202-225-9308 |
| John Salazar (CO-3) | Tate Rosenbusch | 202-225-4761 | 202-226-9669 |
| Brad Ellsworth (IN-8) | Jed D’Ercole | 202-225-4636 | 202-225-3284 |
| Nancy Boyda (KS-2) | Lindsey Matese | 202-225-6601 | 202-225-7986 |
| Zack Space (OH-18) | Aaron Schmidt | 202-225-6265 | 202-225-3394 |
| Tim Walz (MN-1) | Jeremy Bratt | 202-225-2472 | 202-225-3433 |
| Kirsten Gillibrand (NY-20) | Brooke Jamison | 202-225-5614 | 202-225-1168 |
| Steve Kagen (WI-8) | Mark Cason | 202-225-5665 | 202-225-5729 |
| Earl Pomeroy (ND-at large) | Rebecca Blue | 202-225-2611 | 202-226-0893 |
| Lincoln Davis (TN-4) | Noel Smith | 202-225-6831 | 202-226-5172 |
| John Barrow (GA-12) | Chris Schepis | 202-225-2823 | 202-225-3377 |
| Nick Lampson (TX-22) | Carlyle Chess | 202-225-5951 | 202-225-5241 |
| Joe Donnelly (IN-2) | Andrew Lattanner | 202-225-3915 | 202-225-6798 |
| Tim Mahoney (FL-16) | Callie Varner | 202-225-5792 | 202-225-3132 |

110th CONGRESS: HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Republicans

| Representative | Staff | Phone | Fax |
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| Terry Everett (AL-2) | Jennifer Warren | 202-225-2901 | 202-225-8913 |
| Frank Lucas (OK-3) | Nicole Scott | 202-225-5565 | 202-225-8698 |
| Jerry Moran (KS-1) | Aaron Popelka | 202-225-2715 | 202-225-5124 |
| Robin Hayes (NC-8) | Tommy Sevier | 202-225-3715 | 202-225-4036 |
| Timothy Johnson (IL-15) | Bobby Frederick | 202-225-2371 | 202-226-0791 |
| Sam Graves (MO-6) | Seth Appleton | 202-225-7041 | 202-225-8221 |
| Jo Bonner (AL-1) | Watson Donald | 202-225-4931 | 202-225-0562 |
| Mike Rogers (AL-3) | Whitney Verett | 202-225-3261 | 202-226-8485 |
| Steve King (IA-5) | Brent Boydston | 202-225-4426 | 202-225-3193 |
| Marilyn Musgrave (CO-4) | Craig Rushing | 202-225-4676 | 202-225-5870 |
| Randy Neugebauer (TX-19) | Kathy Bergren | 202-225-4005 | 202-225-9615 |
| Charles Boustany Jr. (LA-7) | Michael Hare | 202-225-2031 | 202-225-5724 |
| John "Randy" Kuhl Jr. (NY-29) | Lauryn Bernier | 202-225-3161 | 202-226-6599 |
| Virginia Foxx (NC-5) | Clark Peterson | 202-225-2071 | 202-225-2995 |
| K. Michael Conaway (TX-11) | Scott Graves | 202-225-3605 | 202-225-1783 |
| Jeff Fortenberry (NE-1) | Alan Feyerherm | 202-225-4806 | 202-225-5686 |
| Jean Schmidt (OH-2) | Matt Perin | 202-225-3164 | 202-225-1992 |
| Adrian Smith (NE-3) | Monica Jirik | 202-225-6435 | 202-225-0207 |
| Kevin McCarthy (CA-22) | Shelby Hagenauer | 202-225-2915 | 202-225-2908 |
| Tim Walberg (MI-7) | Matt Mika | 202-225-6276 | 202-225-6281 |

110th CONGRESS: SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Democrats

| Member | Staff | Phone | FAX |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------------|---------------------|
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| Patrick Leahy (VT) | Brian Baenig | 224-4242 | 202-224-3479 |
| Kent Conrad (ND) | Jim Miller, John Fuher | 224-2043 | 202-224-7776 |
| Max Baucus (MT) | Brandon Willis | 224-2651 | 202-224-0515 |
| Blanche Lincoln (AR) | Hannah Jo Smith | 224-4843 | 202-228-1371 |
| Debbie Stabenow (MI) | Kasey Gillette | 224-4822 | 202-228-0325 |
| Ben Nelson (NE) | Jonathan Coppess | 224-6551 | 202-228-0012 |
| Ken Salazar (CO) | Grant Leslie | 224-5852 | 202-228-5036 |
| Sherrod Brown (OH) | Joe Shultz, Eleanor Dehoney | 224-2315 | 202-228-6321 |
| Robert B. Casey, Jr. (PA) | James W. Brown | 224-6324 | 202-228-0604 |
| Amy Klobuchar (MN) | Hilary Meggin Bolea | 224-3244 | 202-228-2186 |

Republicans

| Member | Staff | Phone | FAX |
|--|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| Saxby Chambliss (GA) Ranking Member | Monty Philpot | 202-224-3521 | 202-224-0103 |
| Richard Lugar (IN) | Aaron Whitesel | 224-4814 | 202-228-0360 |
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| Mitch McConnell (KY) | Allison Thompson | 224-2541 | 202-224-2499 |
| Pat Roberts (KS) | Joel Leftwich | 224-4774 | 202-224-3514 |
| Lindsey Graham (SC) | Laura Bauld | 224-5972 | 202-224-3808 |
| Norman Coleman (MN) | Tony Eberhard | 224-5641 | 202-224-1152 |
| Michael Crapo (ID) | Staci Lancaster | 224-6142 | 202-228-1375 |
| John Thune (SD) | Brendon Plack | 224-2321 | 202-228-5429 |
| Chuck Grassley (IA) | Kevin Studer | 224-3744 | 202-224-6020 |

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